

## Ruahine Whio Protection Trust

### Chairs Report 5 July 2017

I am pleased to be presenting my 3rd report as Chair of the Ruahine Whio Protection Trust. This report covers our 2nd full year of operation. I have found it a busy and at some times challenging year but as I look back, I see we have achieved quite a lot.

#### Trustees

We have had changes to our board this year. Founding trustees Chris Mercer and Andrew Mercer resigned during the year and I would like to thank them for the work they did as we set up the Trust. Sue Moore joined us as a trustee at last year's AGM and Ian Rasmussen joined us in August and has taken over the role of finance officer from Chris.

#### Meetings

The Trust has met (more or less) monthly throughout the year, usually at Anne or Colin's home - thank you both for your hospitality.

In July 2016 we convened a very successful meeting of the Ruahine Whio Protectors Collective at Pohangina Base which the Department of Conservation (DOC) provided free of charge. All associated groups were represented. The Ruahine Whio Management Plan (2015-2020) was reviewed and topics on the agenda were wide ranging. Of particular note was the disappointing announcement of DOC's decision to withdraw funding and ranger support from the Te Potae project. One action from the meeting was for the Trust to investigate the development of a "digital strategy" for the Collective.

#### Website and Digital Strategy

I would like to thank Jenny Edwards for volunteering to help with our website and for the time and effort she put in to this during the year. The web site is still a work in progress and I feel we have struggled with this due to lack of time and experience and could have helped Jenny more. In the meantime we have agreed it is important to maintain our web presence ([www.rwp.org.nz](http://www.rwp.org.nz)) with up to date information and to leave a more interactive web site until we are able to make this happen. This needs to be looked into further - perhaps a funding application to buy some expertise?

We now have a google account and email address and keep our records on google drive.

#### Communication and The Collective

We have agreed during the year to share the Trust meeting minutes with the Collective members. This should help communication and understanding between us all.

#### Funding Applications

Funding applications involve a lot of work and can be a frustrating and long winded process - something I am starting to come to terms with. I have come to realise that planning further out is necessary, particularly when applying to DOC for funds. Thanks go to Ian, Sue and Anne for all their hard work writing grant applications.

This year we have applied to 3 funders-

- The DOC Community Conservation fund (CCF) for funding for Whio and Kiwis surveys. This became an application focussing on Kiwi after the whio Surveys in the Northern and Oroua rivers were done by DOC dog/handler teams along with volunteers. Costs for this were met by DOC through Andy Glaser (Whio Recovery Group).
- Central North Island Blue Duck Trust (CNIBDT) for funding to support the Te Potae Project (flights), some new traps for Brian Megaw at River Valley and for ongoing operational costs (erayz etc) across the projects.
- Chalky Digits "Bring Back the Birdsong project" - unfortunately we had no response to this request.

We have also acted as bankers for the money provided by Horizons in support of the Te Potae project.

## Outcomes

- Te Potae project -3 trap checks funded from Horizons grant and from Trust funds. More funding available from CNIBDT grant . We consider this a high priority area for funding as DOC have pulled out.
- Signage - 4 informative signboards have been designed with the help of Anthony Behrens and paid for out of trust funds. These have been installed by DOC at the Rangiwahia carpark, Oroua (Petersons Rd) track and Kashmir Rd end and one was supplied to River Valley . Thanks to Anthony for all his help with this project and to DOC for providing posts etc and installing the signs. A great team effort. We hope that they will inform and promote our work and perhaps attract some donations.



- Newsletter - one edition of the Ruahine Whio News was produced during the year by Anne and Janet. I think this is worthwhile and it is well received but copy is hard to come by from the other members of the Collective.
- Funding to fly traps The trust paid to fly 120 Double set DOC 200's on to the ridge in the Longview Hut area. DOC supplied some labour for this job. The traps were purchased with grants from the He Tini Awa Trust and the CNIBDT. This line along with the expansion in the Pohangina and Oroua rivers (99 A24 traps) represents quite a large expansion to the Oroua/Pohangina Blue Duck Protection Project's trapping network.
- 20 new trap mechanisms for the OPBDPP to replace broken mechanisms.
- gas/erayz etc purchased for OPBDBPP.
- River Valley traps - grant application to CNIBDT 15 for double set DOC 200's successful. (pending - awaiting funds)

## Publicity

We completed the car sticker project. I enjoy seeing them on volunteer's cars at road ends and hope they attract the attention of others.

The Trust and volunteers involved with Whio work in the Ruahines have received regular publicity in local papers, Wilderness , Flight and other publications.

## Other Activities

- Conservation Week - in September a public walk was offered to see the work done by volunteers in the Oroua Valley /Alice Nash Memorial Lodge area. This attracted a good group of interested people led by Janet and Sue.
- Whio Awareness Month Event - in March we had a display at the Esplanade in Palmerston North. We received a small number of donations from the public. There was a good turnout of interested City and Regional Councillors.
- Conservation Inc2 Conference - (Dunedin) this was attended by Janet and Sue. Janet received funding from the Trust for flights and registration. This conference brings together conservation volunteers and is both inspiring and educational.
- Whio Practitioners Workshop Turangi - Janet attended and gave a presentation entitled "A Short History of the Ruahine Whio Protectors Collective"

## Friends of the Trust

As I said last year, I think this is an idea worth pursuing as is the idea of raising funds from public donations. To do this successfully we need more resourcing and knowledge - something to work on this coming year.

It's not always easy running a trust and in some ways we are still "finding our feet". Thank you to you all for the hours you put in for the Ruahine Whio. With more experience it should only get easier. I would also like to thank everyone else who has helped out during the year and to acknowledge the many hours of field work put in by many of us involved with Ruahine Whio Protection.

Janet Wilson

Chair Ruahine Whio Protection Trust

